

Job Description



Job Title: Senior Scrutiny Officer	Service Area: Policy and Communications	
Directorate: People, Policy & Performance	Post Number: Fusion	Evaluation Number: 6245
Grade: P04	Date last updated: December 2021	

People at the heart of everything we do

We are committed to putting people – Newham residents and Council staff – at the heart of all we do. Our approach is a collaborative joint enterprise between residents, the Mayor, Members, Council staff and the Corporate Management Team.

Equality and diversity

We are committed to and champion equality and diversity in all aspects of employment with the London Borough of Newham. All employees are expected to understand and promote our Equality and Diversity policy in the course of their work.

Protecting our staff and services

Adherence to health and safety requirements and proper risk management is required from all employees in so far as is relevant to their role. All employees are expected to understand and promote good health and safety practices and manage risks appropriately.

Corporate parent

We believe that every member of staff working for Newham Council should understand and fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities for our looked after children that we have under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Purpose of the team

In the context of a very uncertain national policy, economic and social environment. it is essential that the organisation is supported to respond to current challenges and anticipate future challenges so that we can develop strategic approaches that enable our residents and communities to thrive. This team brings together a number of distinct but related functions so that we can help deliver innovative policy thinking that is grounded in solid evidence, reflect the diverse needs of our communities, are positioned to attract funding and have influence with decision-makers and ensure that we are constantly reviewing the impacts and outcomes of policy and service decisions to inform our future thinking.

Policy, Scrutiny & Partnerships

The team consists of three portfolios:

1. Policy Design and Scrutiny

To support the senior leadership to use their levers to develop strategic responses to future challenges and support scrutiny to best review the impact of strategies and inform policy development.

2. Strategic Partnerships and Engagement

To promote and develop opportunities to work with Newham's strategic partners to tackle Newham's strategic priorities by influencing government, campaigning for policy change, enhancing collaboration and securing increased funding for the Council and wider borough.

3. Research and Inclusion

To help the organisation gather and use data and other evidence to inform policy and service design in a manner that reflects the diversity of our borough, as well as promote inclusive and participatory approaches.

Overall Purpose of Job

Post-holders will support the facilitation and delivery of the Council's Scrutiny Committee processes, helping to ensure that Scrutiny findings contribute to developing better policy and public services. They will offer strategic advice to the Council's Scrutiny chairs and committees on both policy and governance to enable Scrutiny members to influence and improve wider outcomes. Each post-holder will take the lead for Scrutiny committees, liaising with the appointed Scrutiny chairs and coordinating the delivery of their work programmes.

Job Context

1. This role reports to the Policy and Scrutiny Manager.
2. The post holder may be required to work outside normal business hours in order to meet service requirements.
3. They can be expected to lead project teams in a matrix management arrangement with people from different services or partners.
4. This is a politically restricted post under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990. The individuals holding this post cannot have any active political role.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities:

Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the post holder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the post holder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.

To undertake all responsibilities listed below:

1. Ensure that all members of Scrutiny Committees are provided with comprehensive, high-quality and efficient support and advice to enable them to discharge their roles.
2. Manage individual reviews as directed by the Policy and Scrutiny Manager.
3. Ensure that the overview and scrutiny system is robust. This will involve:
 - providing advice and support to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - providing advice and support to the Chairs of Scrutiny Task and Finish Commissions
 - ensuring the effective operation of Scrutiny Task and Finish Commissions and conduct reviews
 - advising on topics for scrutiny based and sound information/research
 - advising individuals and organisations who are invited to give written or oral evidence
 - drafting well evidenced and concise reports, including securing appropriate research and expertise
 - following up action
4. Provide effective policy analysis, review and development role to support the overview and scrutiny function.
5. Present reports, including those on the outcome of reviews to Scrutiny Task and Finish Commissions and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required.
6. Support proper co-ordination between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council and Cabinet.
7. Contribute to developing, implementing and promoting democratic and decision making structures and procedures relating to overview and scrutiny and advise Members and officers.
8. Liaise with Members to discuss and review requirements of the scrutiny function.
9. Establish and maintain good relationships with stakeholders, Council officers and partnership bodies.

To undertake all responsibilities listed below:

1. Day to day management of individual workload ensuring all commitments are covered.
2. Ensure high standards of work and standards of performance are maintained, maximising the use of IT.
3. Promote and champion equality and diversity in the delivery of all Council activities.
4. Uphold the Council's HEART values.

Personal Specification

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

The criteria listed in this Person Specification are all essential to the job. Where the Method of Assessment is stated to be the Application Form, your application needs to demonstrate clearly and concisely how you meet each of the criteria, even if other methods of assessment are also shown. If you do not address these criteria fully, or if we do not consider that you meet them, you will not be shortlisted. Please give specific examples wherever possible.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

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PROTECTING OUR STAFF AND SERVICES

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CRITERIA- Essential	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
KNOWLEDGE	
High level of understanding of the role of the governance arrangements, the executive and scrutiny function, non-executive Members, performance review and the changing needs of Members.	Application/Interview/Test
Good knowledge of legislation in respect of local authority decision making.	Application

Knowledge of local government policies, strategy, legislative and financial framework.	Interview/Test
QUALIFICATIONS	
Educated to degree level or equivalent or Work experience demonstrating graduate level ability	Application
EXPERIENCE	
Experience of policy and research work including producing high quality written material including reports and presentations.	Application/Interview/Test
Experience of working successfully with Members, stakeholders and members of the public and external agencies.	Application/Interview
Experience of project management, research work and relevant techniques.	Application/Interview
Experience of working effectively with colleagues across a wide variety of services.	Application/Interview
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	
Ability to work in a political environment, recognising sensitive issues and maintaining confidentiality, facing frequently changing demand and dealing with demands from elected Members, officers, members of the community and outside bodies.	Interview
Ability to manage a complex workload with competing priorities and deadlines	Interview
Ability to analyse, interpret and present (in oral and written form) complex information simply and effectively.	Application/Interview

Ability to understand, interpret and present information from a variety of sources.	Application/Interview/Test
Excellent planning and organisational skills, able to prioritise to meet deadlines and demonstrate responsibility for quality and timescales of own work.	Application/Interview
PERSONAL STYLE AND BEHAVIOUR	
<p>You focus on citizens</p> <p>We need to have a continual focus on the outcomes for the communities we serve. This means ensuring we involve citizens throughout the policy making process.</p> <p>Your skills: You embed a culture focused on citizens, ensuring staff & partners keep the needs of residents at the forefront of everything they do, role modelling this yourself.</p>	Application/Interview/Test
<p>You take ownership</p> <p>If we are to successfully drive change then we need people who take responsibility for experimenting and learning. New ways of working can only be achieved if we are prepared to take calculated risks and challenge established ways of doing things.</p> <p>Your skills: You create new opportunities and take bold and decisive action to capitalise on opportunities for the council & borough to adopt a more participative scrutiny function, while creating an environment that supports others.</p>	Application/Interview/Test
<p>You think strategically</p> <p>To deliver the ambitions of the borough's agenda, we need people who can 'join up the dots', challenge current thinking and develop creative solutions to difficult issues.</p> <p>Your skills: You help create new ways of working, drawing new insights to re-define how things are done and boil down complexity to provide clarity and focus.</p>	Application/Interview/Test

<p>You innovate with others</p> <p>We need to be continually inquisitive if we are going to drive improvement in policy making. We need people who are clued up with what's happening across sectors in this area, and with residents too.</p> <p>Your skills: You shape the agenda, seeking out ideas & learning from the best organisations. You're at the forefront of thinking and influence policy makers.</p>	<p>Application/Interview/Test</p>
<p>You drive improvement</p> <p>If there is a need to drive culture change for the council, partners & residents to adopt more participative policy making, then we need people who can address issues & risks head on to drive tangible improvement.</p> <p>Your skills: You constructively challenge peers, partners and senior leaders to deliver change and you're prepared to take appropriate action to tackle under-performance.</p>	
<p>You have strong integrity</p> <p>We need to build trust with citizens, colleagues and partners if we are to make policy in more participative ways. We need people who can deliver what they promise and not be afraid to admit mistakes.</p> <p>Your skills: You walk in other people's shoes to better understand them and how they can support each other, and you learn from your mistakes and act on them.</p>	<p>Application/Interview/Test</p>
<p>OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:</p>	